

**STILLWATER COUNTY  
COMMISSIONER MINUTES**

<p><b>Notice:</b> These minutes reflect the proceedings of the Board of County Commissioners. The official minutes are on file with the Clerk and Recorder MCA 7-4-2611(2)(b).</p>
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**REGULAR MEETING  
August 3, 2021  
6:30 p.m. Nye Community Roundtable**

<b>PRESENT</b>	Commissioner Mark Crago, Chair, Commissioners Tyrel Hamilton and Steve Riveland, members; Shannon Fisher Admin Assistant.  Others Present: Kevin Ray, Road & Bridge; Randy Smith, SCSO. Citizens: Shirlee Keffer, Karla Johnson, Ashley Chancellor, Paula Randall, Noel Wood, Kitty Thomas, David Leuthold, Bud Chenault, Barbara Lischer, Hank Lischer, Sandra Joys, David Joys, Tom Kircher, Matt Wolfe
<b>PLEDGE</b>	Commissioner Crago opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.
<b>MINUTES</b>	July 13, 2021. Commissioner Hamilton <b>MOVED</b> to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Riveland <b>SECONDED</b> . No discussion. <u>Motion passed unanimously.</u>
<b>CLAIMS</b>	107692 through 107754 in the amount of \$511,888.46. Commissioner Riveland <b>MOVED</b> to approve the claims 107692 through 107754 in the amount of \$511,888.46. Commissioner Hamilton <b>SECONDED</b> . Discussion – Shirlee Keffer asked the Commission what the large items were for this amount. Commissioner Crago explained that the large claim on this is for \$403,267.47 to KLE Construction for the Absarokee Sewer Project. <u>Motion passed unanimously.</u>
<b>ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>	Commissioner Crago announced that it is extremely dry and hot and the county is still in Stage II fire restrictions. Please be aware of what the restrictions entail and be cautious of your surroundings when you are outdoors working or recreating. Stillwater River Clean up will be August 27 <sup>th</sup> . Shannon Fisher added that the Stillwater River fishing access clean up day will be August 27 <sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Shannon is looking for volunteers for the grant funded project. All ten fishing accesses will be covered from Old Nye to Fireman’s Point. Shannon also added that she is working with the Weed Coordinator to address the fishing access areas affected by noxious weeds. Commissioner Crago noted that prior to the public roundtable meeting, Stillwater Mine has a presentation on the tailings pond.
<b>FILE ITEMS</b>	<u><b>Treasurer</b></u> A) Report for the Month of June in the amount of \$56,073,936.70.  <u><b>Reed Point Water &amp; Sewer Board</b></u> A) Request for funds for sewer system in the amount of \$60,755.00  <u><b>Road &amp; Bridge</b></u> A) RDO Equipment Rental Agreement  Commissioner Hamilton <b>MOVED</b> to file the file items. Commissioner Riveland <b>SECONDED</b> . No discussion. <u>Motion passed unanimously.</u>

## **REGULAR BUSINESS Commission**

A) MOU for pre-disaster fire mitigation between Beartooth Electric Cooperative, Inc. and Stillwater County. Commissioner Riveland **MOVED** to approve the MOU for pre-disaster fire mitigation between Beartooth Electric Cooperative, Inc. and Stillwater County. Commissioner Hamilton **SECONDED**. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

B) Big Sky Rail Authority Board Appointment. Commissioner Riveland **MOVED** to approve the Big Sky Rail Authority Board Appointment to appoint Commissioner Hamilton. Commissioner Hamilton **SECONDED**. Discussion – Shirlee Keffer asked who would be appointed to the board. Commissioner Crago replied that Commissioner Riveland named Commissioner Hamilton in his motion. Shirlee noted that it was previously stated that this would not cost the taxpayers a dime to have a seat at the table. Commissioner Hamilton replied that it will not. Motion passed unanimously.

## **Law & Justice**

A) A&E Design Proposal for Law & Justice Center in the amount of \$984,940.00. Commissioner Hamilton **MOVED** to approve the A&E Design Proposal for Law & Justice Center in the amount of \$984,940.00. Commissioner Riveland **SECONDED**. Discussion – Commissioner Crago asked if this money includes money already spent on A&E services for the Law & Justice center to this point. Commissioner Hamilton replied that this is tracking a little under the industry average of ten percent of the total project cost and this is about nine and a half percent of total project cost for architect and engineering fees. This will be paid out over the duration of the entire project. Commissioner Crago noted that this scope of service would be schematic design, design development, construction documents as well as construction administration of the Law and Justice center. Commissioner Hamilton added that he believes the money spent is part of the schematic design. Shirlee Keffer asked if this will cost us a million dollars to get the design for the Law and Justice center. Commissioner Crago replied yes and it will include construction management. Commissioner Hamilton stated that they will oversee the project, make sure the project stays on schedule and on budget and to utilize opportunities to come in under budget. Shirlee asked if there was someone else hired to oversee all these projects. Commissioner Hamilton replied that we are no longer utilizing that service for these projects. Shirlee also asked if there has been any advancement of the sale of the old hospital and assisted living facility. Commissioner Crago replied not at this time. Shirlee asked if that was sold for about a million dollars. Commissioner Crago responded 1.95 million and he is in the process of having an appraisal. Shirlee asked if it was a million dollars for a design. Commissioner Hamilton replied that the design is a portion of it and that it also includes all the construction management through the end of the project. Motion passed unanimously.

B) Preconstruction services from Dick Anderson Construction in the amount of \$37,500.00. Commissioner Riveland **MOVED** to approve the Preconstruction services from Dick Anderson Construction in the amount of \$37,500. Commissioner Hamilton **SECONDED**. Discussion – Van Wood asked what are the preconstruction services being provided. Commissioner Crago replied that Dick Anderson is the general construction manager on the capital facility projects and they are coming back on board at this juncture of the planning process and they will be a check and balance for the architect for various expenses. They will aid the architectural firm to design a building and project that can stay within the planned budget for this project. David Joys asked what the total budget is for the Law & Justice Center. Commissioner Crago responded that the budget is \$11.5 million dollars and the funds are coming from various savings and capital funds the county has and the Sheriff's department has received CARES Act reimbursement. The county is currently applying for ARPA funds for help with the infrastructure funding. There are several various grants from different agencies the county will be applying for such as homeland security grants and public safety grants. Commissioner Crago further stated that the goal of the facility capital improvement planning committee for any and all projects has been to not be a tax implication on the county. The goal is to do this with funds on hand, funds coming in and capital savings that have been set aside to be allocated to capital improvements and grant funding. David Leuthold asked how the part of the funding from PILT and metal mines tax has that money been used in the past. Commissioner Crago replied that a lot of the PILT money is savings that is being stored

up to pay for this project. Recently that fund was approximately 2.6 million dollars. The metal mines fund can only be used for economic development and planning in the county and that fund is approximately 2.5 to 3 million dollars as well. Metal mines money in the past has operated the planning and economic development department. The expenses that are normally used out of these funds will continue and the remainder is used to continue to fund these projects. Motion passed unanimously.

**Absarokee Sewer**

A) \$175,000.00 ARPA funds match request for competitive grant for Absarokee Hawkins Park well water treatment system. Commissioner Crago explained that approximately a month ago, Absarokee water district put in a request for funds, similar to the Reed Point Sewer funds request. Absarokee water district requested to be on the agenda today. At this time there have been no updates to the amounts available in the ARPA allocated funds for the County. Without knowing the committed funding amounts this request should be revisited when the county has the updated ARPA funds amounts. Commissioner Hamilton added that they were hoping to have received numbers for the remaining funds from Economic Development and Planning after the other grant funding request were met. Commissioner Hamilton **MOVED** to take no action on this item and move it to next week's agenda. Commissioner Riveland **SECONDED**. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON COUNTY BUSINESS** – Shirlee Keffer stated that she missed the meeting last Tuesday. Shirlee asked how the surveys has been responded to. She contacted Stephanie Ray and found out that 4708 surveys were mailed out. One thousand have been returned. Everybody seems to agree with the Law & Justice Center and a straw poll at Politics and Eggs seemed to solidify the Commissioners to do that. Shirlee went on to say that she is concerned about not using the courthouse for the services of the county services instead of building a new complex. Looking at the new evaluation surveys, it is about a toss-up. It has been said that the Courthouse is a money pit. It has also been said that at one time it was not stable enough to put in elevators. When the brochure was mailed out it showed putting elevators in the courthouse but no occupants. Shirlee strongly encourages the Commission to look at using the courthouse for the purpose it was built and with the Law & Justice Center being built, there will be 8,000 square feet will be available to bring the services into the courthouse. If it is not safe, then it needs to be demolished even though the survey said they want to save the courthouse. Maybe we should ask the Commission what it will cost to save the courthouse. The reality is do we spend more money or destroy it like we did with the old hospital. As you move forward, please take into consideration the voices of “We the People” of Stillwater County. The disclaimer that was in the brochure that said there will be no impact on property taxes, Shirlee said she does not see that as a true statement because you cannot guarantee that, not necessarily for the building projects but just on valuations and taxes going up. If you decide to build a new office complex, then you will have two maintenance buildings, the courthouse with no occupants plus the new building. It comes to a point of it will cost the taxpayers money. As you go forward, we will be watching as far as what are the people saying about how to spend the money that comes into Stillwater County.

**With no further comments heard the meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m.**

APPROVED BY:     /s/ Mark Crago, Commissioner Chairman  
ATTEST:           Heidi L. Stadel, Clerk and Recorder